

# LINCOLN LESSONS FOR TO-DAY

By

GARRETT NEWKIRK



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# LINCOLN LESSONS FOR TODAY





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By  
GARRETT NEWKIRK

*"Today includes yesterday, and  
will be yesterday, tomorrow."*



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*TO*  
*MY WIFE*  
*MARTHA THE FAITHFUL*



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# LINCOLN LESSONS FOR TODAY





# LINCOLN LESSONS FOR TODAY

## THE MAN

BECAUSE of personality unique in manner, simple and unstudied; because of his honesty, undeviating and sincere, his intimate knowledge and understanding of his fellow men, with kindness for all; because of the purity of his life, his courtesy to women, his respect for the aged, his affection for children; because of the accuracy and depth of his thinking, his ability to embody the greatest thought in fewest words, his humor, his logic, his directness of purpose and homely simplicity; because of his modesty, unselfishness and infinite patience; because of his patriotism and the dominant part he played in the most important crisis of a nation's history; because of the love he inspired in the hearts of millions and the loyal devotion of armies and navies; because of his tragic end and the mournfullest night this country ever knew—ABRAHAM LINCOLN com-

mands our highest admiration, affection and gratitude. He stands before us as the most interesting figure and the greatest save one in American history.

In all history we hear of no other who within fifty years after his death became so universally respected and beloved, for whom so many had the feeling almost of personal kinship.

As the tender thoughts of a mother, or the admonitions of a dying father, so come his unforgettable words to us in time of trial or distress; and should there be temptation to wrong-doing we shall see before us, like a mentor with uplifted hand, his towering Conscience.

## EARLY ADDRESSES

### I

SOME have spoken of these disparagingly, as having little value. Truth is that a number of subjects discussed in the thirties and early forties have little interest comparatively for readers of a later generation: and few of the critics have taken time to consider carefully those early first deliverances. Bearing in mind the conditions then present, we shall find them well worthy of study, showing the maturity of thought already possessed by a very young man. We will be forced to the conclusion that in some respects the education of the boy and youth must have been pretty thorough, notwithstanding his lack of schooling. In one way or another he had acquired the essentials of knowledge that justified his entrance into public life.

The first address to be included in "The Complete Works" \* of Lincoln was written for, "the people of Sangamon County," when Lincoln was a candidate for the office of Representative in the

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\* Edited by Nicolay and Hay.

legislature of Illinois. It was dated March 9, 1832, when he was only twenty-three years and three weeks old. Two years before, in the same month of March, he had arrived in the adjoining county of Macon, mud-bespattered, driving an ox team. Immediately he had helped build a log cabin, split rails for the fencing of ten acres of prairie, helped plow the field and plant it with sod-corn. The following spring he had engaged himself to Orcutt to take a flat-boat to New Orleans for the wage of twelve dollars per month. And now, one year later, probably without an unpatched suit of clothes, he is a candidate for the legislature, and issues his address in the form of hand bills that are sent for distribution to the several townships.

He starts out with the question of internal improvements in relation to Sangamon County itself, as yet without connection with the outside world or adequate markets, except by the poorest wagon roads running fifty miles to the Illinois River, or to the new town on Lake Michigan, one hundred and seventy-five miles distant. Under present circumstances the young statesman favors the improvement of the Sangamon River as the only one the people are able to pay for. He shows in detail how this can be accomplished, as no other man probably in that

county knew. It would, he thought, make the river navigable "for boats of twenty-five to thirty tons' burden." Yet he says, "No other improvement that reason will justify us in hoping for can equal in utility the railroad. But, however desirable it\* may be, however high our imaginations may be heated by thoughts of it, there is always a heart-appalling shock accompanying the amount of its cost which causes us to shrink from our pleasing anticipations." The cost had been estimated at \$290,000 by its projectors.

Then he attacks "the practice of loaning money at exorbitant rates of interest"—something that no new community has ever been entirely able to escape. He would of course favor restrictive laws upon usury in the State. Such laws were passed not many years later.

The next subject for consideration by the Legislature on which Lincoln lays particular stress, is that of education. Considering that he had not been to school himself a whole year altogether, this seems remarkable. First of all he takes the patriotic view "That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, and duly appreciate the value of our free institutions . . . is of vital importance, to say

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\* The line proposed ran to the Illinois River and beyond.

nothing of all being able to read the scriptures and other works of both a religious and moral nature for themselves.”

We should remember that at this time, or not long before, in a number of the western states, a considerable minority of the people could not write their own names, but in signing legal documents made their X or mark. The common school system of Illinois had been established by law seven years before, but, owing to the thinly settled condition of the State and the general poverty, there had been but a slight advance in popular education.

## EARLY ADDRESSES

### II

IN his first address: "To the voters of Sangamon County," announcing his candidacy for the legislature, it is interesting to note that Lincoln was considerably less than half way from the day of his birth to that time when his voice should ring out "high toned and clear, across the waiting land," in the conflict with Douglas for supremacy in the Prairie State.

He was little more than a youth, scarce removed from the ax and plow-handles, just away from the flatboat floating down the Sangamon, the Illinois, and the Mississippi. And yet, in this almost boyish address he struck the keynote of his whole public career.

*First, devotion to the truth:* "Upon the subjects above treated, I have spoken as I thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them, but holding it a sound maxim that it is better to be sometimes right than at all times wrong, as soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them."

*Second, his ambition:* "Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. I can say, for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young, and unknown to many of you. I was born, and have ever remained, in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations or friends to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the country; if I am elected they will have conferred a favor upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined.

Your friend and fellow citizen,  
A. LINCOLN."

He had little opportunity of following up the address and getting acquainted with the "many" who did not know him in other parts of the large county.

The ink was barely dry on the handbill address, when the Black Hawk war broke out. In little more than a month Lincoln was elected Captain



of the local company of volunteers by a three to one vote, and was on the way to the scene of conflict. Late in the summer, after a reenlistment and discharge with the war practically ended, he returned to the political field of Sangamon. Having had their horses stolen, he and several friends were forced to make most of their way back on foot. The election took place on the 6th of August. This was the only election in which Lincoln was ever defeated by a direct vote of the people. Thirty-five years later, when Douglas won the senatorship, the defeat came at the hands of the legislature, not by popular vote. But in the democratic precinct of New Salem, where Lincoln was acquainted, he, a Whig, received 227 of the 300 votes cast. After this first political campaign he was elected to the Illinois legislature for three consecutive terms, and declined the fourth nomination.

What justified Lincoln at this early period of his life, with so little of preparation—as we suppose—in aspiring to so important a position as that of a legislator for the state? First, we may say, it was the day of ambitious young men in the new commonwealth. They were coming from the East and Southeast in rapidly increasing numbers and these young voters were inclined to favor candidates of their own age rather than older men,

who for the most part were unprogressive, if not ignorant. A few years later, in this same environment, Stephen A. Douglas, four years younger than Lincoln, recently come from Vermont, where he had been a cabinet maker with limited education, became in rapid succession a school teacher, a law student, a practicing attorney, and at the age of twenty-two a successful candidate for the office of states' attorney. Similarly, in almost every case, if the young voters of Illinois felt that the newcomer was a man of ability with good fighting spirit, they were not apt to trouble themselves overmuch about his antecedent history. It was a rare opportunity for the aspiring young men, and they were not at all slow or timid in taking hold.

## EARLY ADDRESSES

### III

WHAT preparation had Lincoln to justify his high ambition? That he should announce himself a candidate for the legislature at the early age of twenty-three seems almost audacious. Perhaps it appeared so to him, for he says near the conclusion of this address: "Considering the great degree of modesty which should always attend youth it is probable that I have already been more presuming than becomes me." He had the unusual combination of much modesty with even greater courage. He said many years afterward that he had no remembrance of a man he was afraid of. But this seemingly new purpose: How old was it? We do not know. It probably dates back to his boyhood. Before he was ten years old, his own mother had stimulated his ambition, saying, as reported, "Study and learn all you can, Abe, make the most of yourself: You've just as good blood in your veins as Washington had." And in his address at Trenton in February, 1861, he himself stated that away back in the

earliest days of his reading he was impressed by the story and example of revolutionary heroes. He was ever a dreamer, and his dreams began early.

Of what was he dreaming when he borrowed books, any he could hear of, miles around, especially those that related to American biography and history? How early did his hero worship begin? We know that the ambition of any normal boy is that he shall be like his hero, and, in time achieve like distinction.

Of what was the lad dreaming when he borrowed from the owner, Esquire Turnham, "The Statutes of Indiana?" How many boys were there think you, in Spencer and the adjoining counties, who would have choosen that book for close and thorough study? The book contained beside statutes, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Act of Virginia passed in 1783, by which the "Territory North Westward of the river Ohio" was ceded to the United States, and the Ordinance of 1787, passed by Congress for governing the same territory (a region now comprising many states). There was a clause in this Ordinance prohibiting slavery to which Lincoln referred many times in later years.

Of what was the youth dreaming when he would

walk fifteen miles or more to hear a noted speaker; when he crowded forward with others, barefooted as he was, to shake hands with a man like Breckenridge and tell him, "You made the best speech I ever heard"? When, thinking of it all, he walked rapidly homeward, ready to repeat the substance of the speech to any audience he could gather, imitating closely the style and action of the orator himself?

Indiana and Illinois were neighbor states, with practically the same problems to meet of law and order, roads, bridges, and improvement of navigable streams. Think of the value of such a thorough study of the statutes of the older state for application to the conditions of the newer.

Verily the dreams of the boy and youth were coming true. He was no mere upstart rushing in "where angels fear to tread." Not many of those who met at Vandalia in the year 1834 had received a better practical schooling, a more thorough preparation for the work to be done. Making few speeches,—none long—he worked, and made his mark distinctively on the history of the state. It was largely by his adroit management that the capitol was removed to Springfield, a consummation of great value.

So we may say that his first "address to the voters of Sangamon County" was fully justified

by Lincoln's ability to meet the requirements of the office to which he aspired. Although, having been prevented from making the necessary canvass, he was defeated, the "address" was just as applicable two years later when he was elected. There was no word in it to erase or change. This was a characteristic of the addresses he was to make afterward, even to the last of his public utterances.

## EARLY ADDRESSES

### IV

ON January 27th, 1837, Mr. Lincoln, then nearly 28 years old, delivered a speech before the young men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois. The subject of the evening was, "The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions."

I would that every student of Lincoln might have access to "The Complete Works" and read the speech as a whole. First, he considers briefly our great inheritance, geographic and governmental; next he asks, wherein is our danger? It cannot come, he says, from abroad. "It must spring up amongst us. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time or die by suicide."

"If I am not over wary, there is even now something of ill omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country—the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts, and the worse than savage

mobs for the executive ministers of justice. That it exists, though grating on our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of the truth to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs form the every-day news of the times. They have pervaded the country from New England to Louisiana."

After stating that the conditions are nation wide, he refers particularly to certain extreme cases in Mississippi where first gamblers were hung, then "negroes suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection, then white men suspected of being in league with the negroes, and finally strangers from neighboring states going thither on business . . . thus went on the process of hanging till dead men were seen dangling from boughs of trees on many a roadside." . . . Again he says: "Turn to that horror-striking scene in St. Louis where a mulatto murderer was burned to death."

Then he proceeds to enumerate the consequences if such things are allowed to continue. Speaking of the effect on the minds of men he says, "It goes on step by step till all the walls erected for the defence of persons and property are trodden down and disregarded. But all this is not the full extent of the evil. By such examples . . . the perpetrators of the acts going unpunished . . . the lawless in spirit are encouraged to become lawless



in practice, and having been used to no restraint but dread of punishment they thus become absolutely unrestrained. *Having ever regarded government as their deadliest bane, they make a jubilee of the suspension of its operations, and pray for nothing so much as its total annihilation."*

Could we find a better description of the spirit of the I. W. W. and the Bolshevism of our present day?

Continuing he says: "Whenever this effect shall be produced among us, when the vicious portion of the population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, and burn churches, ravage and rob, throw printing presses into rivers, shoot editors, hang and burn people obnoxious to themselves at pleasure and with impunity, depend on it, this government cannot last."

This has remarkable force from the fact that soon after, November 7th of the same year, the Rev. Elisha P. Lovejoy, an abolitionist editor, was shot and killed after suffering the loss of three printing presses within twelve months, at Alton, Illinois.

## EARLY ADDRESSES

### v

CONSIDERING further in his Lyceum speech the danger to our political institutions, of a growing disregard of law, Lincoln asks, "How shall we fortify against it?—The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher of posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. What the patriots of seventy-six did to support the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the laws, so let every American now pledge his life, his property and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the babe that prattles in her lap; let it be taught in schools, seminaries and colleges . . . let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice."

“Bad laws if they exist should be repealed as soon as possible; still, while they continue in force, for the sake of example they should be religiously observed.” . . .

“THERE IS NO GRIEVANCE THAT IS A FIT OBJECT FOR REDRESS BY MOB LAW!”

In this connection Lincoln had in mind particularly the action of mobs upon the abolitionists, at that time probably the worst hated people in the country. He states the issue clearly and logically in all such cases. “One of two positions is necessarily true—that is, the thing, (discussion of slavery) is right in itself, and therefore deserves protection, . . . or it is wrong, and therefore deserves to be prohibited by legal enactment; and in neither case is the interposition of mob law necessary, justifiable or excusable.”

His own view of this matter, the right to discuss the question of slavery, (denied by the slave-holders and their followers) is shown clearly by the “PROTEST” he wrote to be spread upon the journal of the State Legislature only thirty-six days later. It seems strange now that this body, lawgivers of a free state, should have been so over-awed by the dominating slave-power that, instead of condemning mob violence and giving protection to free speech within the borders of the state, they tacitly gave consent to such outrages,

and passed a special resolution, condemning the abolitionists in *toto*.

Only two members of the legislature protested against the passage of this resolution, and refused to vote for it. Their assertion that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy," seems now to be exceedingly mild, but it required a good deal of personal courage on the part of these two—Lincoln and Stone—to sign such a statement, and move that it be made a part of the permanent record.

But Lincoln was determined that no expression regarding slavery should be passed unaccompanied by the declaration that it was an evil. In his Lyceum speech a month before he had stood for the right of free speech in its discussion. It is noteworthy that when Lovejoy was murdered at Alton a few months later, not a newspaper in Springfield, and few in the state uttered a word of condemnation of the act, or invoked justice on the perpetrators. No wonder that Lincoln took a pessimistic view of the country's future, in face of such exhibitions of moral cowardice and shameful disregard of human rights! At this time, when only 28 years of age, he stood almost alone in his neighborhood for the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the reign of law. It was a long road that lay before him to the day of triumph in 1860.

## THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

**F**IVE hundred and thirty words will pass for a short article in a newspaper. It is scanned by the reader usually in three minutes or less. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address contains two hundred and sixty-five words, just half the number mentioned, and can be read deliberately in less than two minutes. And a man might read it every week for a year, and at the last have a thought brought to him that he had overlooked.

The oration of Edward Everett, delivered just before Lincoln's short speech, consists of 20,000 words and took nearly two hours of time. By some present it was pronounced one of the greatest intellectual efforts ever made. Probably not a score of persons could be found in the United States today who have ever read it completely through.

Of the 265 words of Lincoln's address, 187 are of one syllable, and 52 have each two syllables; of the remaining sixteen, three are used twice, leaving thirteen in all to be accounted for. Four of these have four syllables each, and the remaining nine each have three.

The thirteen words are "altogether," "continent," "consecrated," "consecrate," "created," "dedicate," "dedicated," "devotion," "government," "liberty," "proposition," "remaining," "unfinished." The three repeated are: "dedicate," "dedicated" and "devotion."

If one were superstitious he might think to find significance in the beginning and ending of this list, placed in alphabetical order. "Altogether" is the first word, "dedicated" the middle, and "remaining," "consecrated" the two last.

It will be noted that no shorter word can be substituted for one of those containing three or four syllables.

Notwithstanding the acceptance of this address by all the English speaking world as one of the few greatest ever delivered, it has not been without its critics, who have found it full of faults according to their standards. They have called attention to the many repetitions of certain words. They have said that eleven repetitions of the word "that" was inexcusable in so short an address, in one place adjoining,— "that that," (as Lincoln himself might have said, "end to end"). They thought he should have avoided the use of the plural pronoun "we" nine times: of "here" five times,— twice in one sentence. They said it was impossible to consider this speech a master-composition.

One thing is certain, Lincoln was totally unaware that he was competing for a literary prize. He was only trying to put a great thought in few words that every hearer or reader should not fail to understand.

Here is the test: add or subtract a word anywhere, or substitute one word for another, make the speech by one word longer or shorter, without weakening the sentence involved and the speech as a whole.

No critic could ever tamper with it, trying to improve it, without disappointing himself. Each word fits exactly, like a piece of perfect mosaic. That several of the pieces happen to be alike does not mar in the least the perfection of the workmanship.

There is one small book that should be in every American home. It is called "Ideals of the Republic." It contains the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, Washington's two Inaugural Addresses and his Farewell Address, Lincoln's two Inaugural Addresses and the Gettysburg speech.—It is of good print, that any man may carry in his coat pocket for reading in spare moments. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 65c.

## THE WISE MEN NOT CONSULTED

**I**N the selection of boys and their preparation for the making of great men, the Almighty seems to have paid little attention in times past to the rules of the schools or opinions of the learned.

Suppose that about the year 1809 a convention had been called of those reputed to be wise, in the United States. Suppose it had been told these people, that, half a century thereafter a great emergency would come in the affairs of this country; a crisis involving the very existence of the nation; that a great leader would be needed for this most critical time; that it was immediately necessary to seek out a proper child for the making of a man to meet that great occasion, and to see to it that he was rightly educated and prepared. What would they have done about it?

Of course the first thing would have been to appoint a committee of chief educators with power to act. These would have proceeded to find a comely Hannah with a promising Samuel—by competitive examination, possibly. They would have said that, of course, the child should come of



good stock, one of the first families of the land; that he must be educated with great care, by the most celebrated tutors, that his conduct should be governed by strict regulations. In order that his manners or morals might not be corrupted he should be allowed to move only in the best society, and have no "common" associations. They would have said, "Let us show the world what proper selection and right training will develop. When the occasion comes, WE will have the MAN."

But the Almighty found a poor boy in a pioneer cabin among the white-oak hills. His feet were bare and his garments homespun. His books were few, his mother almost his only teacher. He had—

"Free growth among the wild flowers, plants and trees,  
Music of bird and brook,"

swimming and hunting and fishing, or gathering chips to build his mother's fire, till he was old enough to swing the ax of a pioneer woodsman.

With hard labor and coarse fare, his frame grew tall and strong, fitted to bear great burdens. He sat by the fireside of the humble, and lived their life until his sympathies were close to all mankind. Struggling ever with adverse circumstance, he grew no foolish pride or false ambition. He was taught to depend, not on the shallow

knowledge of a multitude of things, but rather on the power and value of fundamental truths.

No golden coins of knowledge came to him fresh minted from the schools; he had to dig the metal for himself in the mines of experience and close reading, separate the dross and weigh the product in his thought. He was strictly taught from earliest years that simple honesty, with loving kindness and sincerity, should be his rule of conduct: That he must never compromise with wrong, or forget the God Who made him.

And so, with a clean heredity of God's own choosing, a manner of training that accorded with His plan, THE MAN WAS MADE TO MEET THE HOUR.

## SUPER-GREAT LEADERS

**I**N America we have had two, one for the 18th, one for the 19th century. Any intelligent schoolboy can name them at once. In personality very different, each of these leaders in his own way, fitting the circumstances of his time, attained the height of super-greatness. Each had an overmastering conscience, absolute honesty, love of truth for its own sake, perfect courage, indomitable will, the self-sacrificing spirit, patience of endurance, supreme love of country, and with all an unfaltering faith in Divine control and guidance. With this combination of qualities, each was able to go forward, amid the greatest difficulties, and never make a blunder.

Why is it that the man considered great, will almost certainly blunder at some critical moment of his public life, it may be just once, so preventing himself from attaining the highest niche of fame? Somewhere in the chain of character is a weak link, that bends or breaks under stress.

Wherein is the difference of mistake and blunder? Any great man will make mistakes necessarily, because he cannot know all the facts

in relation to his problem. But he may reason accurately upon the facts understood. Whenever he fails to act in accordance with known truth, whenever he is swerved or turned from the straight path by some consideration of the ego, he makes the blunder, since he is not able to eliminate self from the question he is called upon to decide. There is usually an impulse of fear that some harm may react upon himself by the pursuance of a given course; that it may interfere with some desire or ambition of his own. Being tempted, he yields a little in the application of a fixed principle, and blunders. He makes a false move when he knows or should know better. Remember, we are speaking of the truly great man, who is capable of correct reasoning. Of course, the man who is not big enough for his job cannot help blundering unless he is guided by another.

The moment a man in high position loses sight of the fact that he should be purely a servant of the people, of truth, and of righteousness, and allows self to enter the field of vision, he cannot see clearly, and becomes an unsafe leader.

Why did Napoleon make the blunder of a winter campaign against Russia? It was a plain violation of reason and common sense. It seems not to have occurred to his mind that a few sparks of

fire might destroy the city of refuge. No one may question his greatness, but he was evidently blinded by inordinate personal ambition. This made him ready to sacrifice without limit the lives of others, in order that he might rise yet higher in power, even to the supreme control of Europe.

Being selfish, inconsiderate of the rights of others, he blundered, where Washington or Lincoln would have retained a balance of mind and purpose. They in his position would have sought the harmony and peace of Europe, with justice for all peoples.

## NOT MANY EQUALS IN HISTORY

**I**N the time of Washington there were a number of men who considered themselves, and were thought by others to be, equal or superior to him. But with hardly an exception those who lived to see his work completed came to acknowledge his supremacy in the creation of this government. A similar statement holds good with reference to Lincoln. There were very few, North or South, who, within a few years following his death would have denied him the place of supreme distinction in the work of preserving the Union.

Even the Secretary of State, who at one time had thought himself far greater; and that he should be "the power behind the throne," came to say: "He was easily the leader of us all."

There were a number of great men, statesmen and leaders before Lincoln's day, and others contemporaneous with him, but not one who possessed so perfectly as he that combination of all the necessary qualities to make him supremely great.

Have we had one since? Few I think would answer yes. One or two have been considered,

but however great they were it seems to the writer that they did not possess the poise and balance of mind, the freedom from selfness and personal bias, possessed by Lincoln and Washington. Indeed there have been a number of quiet men in the presidency, nothing striking or spectacular about them, who were better balanced, more reliable of judgment than the recent popular idols—elected or non-elected.

Whom have we in European history to rank with our two super-great? There have been in England a number no doubt, who came near but hardly quite to the mark. The intelligent Briton will acknowledge that he has to go back a thousand years to find the only one to whom is accorded the title "Great." Their one sacred name is Alfred. In Holland we find one, four hundred years ago, qualified beyond question. William of Orange had equal wisdom and ability, a supreme love that overmastered every selfish motive or consideration; and he too gave "the last full measure of devotion," as did Lincoln. For he also was assassinated by the hand of his enemies. And no greater tribute was ever given to a man than this: "WHEN HE DIED THE CHILDREN OF HOLLAND CRIED IN THE STREETS."

Do we find another in Europe?

The writer does not consider himself qualified to answer this question. Undoubtedly the people of several nations might lay claim to one or more each, but would the candidates bear measurement from every point of view? A number of historians have been asked for an opinion. One has suggested Admiral Coligny of France, or Mazzini of Italy. And Asia? We are only sure of one, whom any biblical student will instantly name. There is none of any other race to consider than this leader of Israel. Do we find Lincoln's equal elsewhere? At least in one great leader of Israel that any biblical student will instantly name.

We have scant knowledge of the life and personality of Moses, comparing him with those who lived within the time of printed records. But without doubt he had the same super-qualities of leadership, making due allowance for the time in which he lived. First, he killed a man who was oppressing one of his people. Then he fled to save his life. He seems to have been utterly distrustful of himself after that, brooding with his conscience forty years. It took a miracle to drive him back to the work laid out for him, and miracles to sustain him afterward. But he performed the most difficult task perhaps ever given to a man in this world. He saved a nation from its



enemies—and from itself. He set going on the earth an energizing force of inconceivable power.

He appears to have had an all absorbing love for his people, with complete self-surrender. When his work was done he would not even be present at his own funeral. He would not allow his bones to be made the object of superstitious veneration. He went off and died by himself—  
“And no man knoweth his grave to this day.”

Had they known, a foolish people would have made the place another Mecca of idolatrous pilgrimage and worship.

No doubt the Almighty has had his thousands—men and women—qualified of heart and soul to be among the super-great; but only a few stand out to human vision.

## WHO WAS LINCOLN'S BEST FRIEND?

**I**N order to answer this question it is necessary to relate briefly one of the stories of the Civil War.

More than half the people of the Border States were loyal to the Union. A majority of these had been opposed to Lincoln politically; they had been in a way pro-slavery; many even were slave-holders. The greatest internal diplomatic problem of the administration was to keep these people solid for the Union, and to prevent their respective States from being dragged bodily into the Southern Confederacy. It required the leadership of a very wise and patient man to accomplish this task. No matter what he did he would arouse more or less opposition, and make for himself enemies.

In all the border states except one, the lines were clearly drawn between the two parties of Union and Secession; there were practically no sub-factions. The exceptional state was Missouri. That state had never been—is not to this day, homogeneous. It had the misfortune to come into the Union as a slave state under terms of the "Missouri Compromise." Looking at the

map you discover that it was almost surrounded by free states or territories; East by Illinois, North by Iowa, West by Kansas and Nebraska.

The slave-holding element was dominant in the river counties, with exception of a strong union element in St. Louis. Northward, settlers came chiefly from free states. Most of these were bitterly pro-Union. In other parts were conservative Unionists, and everywhere a floating, irresponsible class, who engaged in irregular warfare and robbery, a disgrace to the cause they ostensibly favored. The conservative and radical Unionists could never agree upon anything either of local or national policy.

Under the impulsive leading of General Fremont, who was both impractical and insubordinate, the radicals of Missouri were stirred almost to a state of frenzy. Unfortunately a large element of Lincoln's own party in the North sympathized with them, blaming him chiefly for the discord and violence prevalent throughout the state. Lincoln believed that to yield to their dictation would lose to him the other border states, if not Missouri itself. Trying to pacify the various elements, Mr. Lincoln appointed General Schofield commandant of the Southwest department, a man of good judgment as he believed. But the radicals of Missouri were bitterly dissatisfied.

They wanted Fremont again or some one like him. They sent a committee of seventy to Washington to interview the President and to demand peremptorily the removal of Schofield, and a complete change of policy. The committee was acclaimed all over the North, fêted and dined all along the route, and in Washington itself. The spokesman told Lincoln to his face that blood would be upon his head for the dire consequences that would follow his refusal of their demands.

They said bitter things that cut him to the heart, and tears coursed the wrinkles of his care-worn cheeks.

He explained his position to them, calmly, kindly, but would not yield to their demands; though he knew the whole North would be aflame on the morrow with denunciation of his course.

He concluded with this statement:

"You gentlemen must remember that in performing the duties of the office I hold, I must represent no one section of the Union, but all, in trying to maintain the supremacy of the government.

"I desire to so conduct the affairs of this administration that if, at the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall have at least one friend left, AND THAT FRIEND SHALL BE THE ONE DOWN INSIDE OF ME."

## HIS CONSCIENCE

WHO but Lincoln would have thought of expressing conscience in such homely fashion and so effectively?—"The friend that is down inside of me."

Though he lost every other friend on earth, he meant to keep that one to the end.

Lincoln was pre-eminently a friendly man, and possessed an unusual aptitude for making friends: and no one appreciated more than he the approval and confidence of his friends, but of all friendships the one he prized most was that of "the friend down inside"—his Conscience.

The story is told that shortly after he became president, Mrs. Lincoln brought to him a current report that Seward was the power behind the throne. He replied emphatically: "I may not rule myself, but certainly Seward shall not rule me. The only ruler is my conscience—following God in it—those men will have to learn that yet."

ATTENTION! Boys and girls, young men and maidens, at home, in school, in employment. Attention, too, employers, parents and teachers. How many are ready to give wholeheartedly as

Lincoln did the first place of friendship to Conscience, "the friend that is down inside" of you?

Do you believe truly that conscience—truth, honesty—can be depended on and will not fail to win the greatest self-respect, the highest satisfaction and success?

When others, claiming to be friends, or our own desires, appeal to us to do this or that, are we not often tempted to say to the inside friend: "Keep still, we want no interference from you?"

By listening to and obeying this inside friend Lincoln lost for a time many friends—or followers. He made for a while bitter enemies. But in the end he bound to himself all friends worth having, and today he holds the faith and confidence of mankind and will hold it while words are printed and people read in any language.

Suppose that he had yielded to those clamoring other "friends" and done as they wished, instead of following strictly the advice of conscience, or suppose he had once permitted a spirit of selfishness or of doubtful policy to rule his actions, where would he now stand by comparison?

A great element of his strength lay in his humility. He had little faith in human nature that was not held close to the divine. He said once: "I have always regarded Peter as sincere when he said he would never deny his Master. Yet he

did deny him. Now I think I shall keep my word and maintain the stand I have taken; but I must remember that I am liable to infirmity, and may fall."

But Lincoln had behind him what Peter did not have, the life-long habit of standing firm, obeying under all circumstances the voice of that friend inside.

## HIS HEREDITY

WHENCE came those qualities of mind and heart that made him super-great, that caused this spring of world-wide influence to flow? Not from inoculation, the special food he ate, the kind of house he lived in, or from the clothes he wore. He had them by inheritance. No river can rise higher than its source or escape the waters flowing into it. The lower Mississippi represents two parent streams of very different color. Each one is fed by innumerable tributaries. So it is with heredity. Tell us quickly, reader, how many great-great-grandparents have you? Who were they all? Tell us about them, where they lived and what they did. Come nearer, one generation, how much do you know?

We know the stream we navigate but not its many sources. We know the man, or think we do; yet never entirely, with his deeper, hidden currents. His parents as a rule we do not know, or but imperfectly. It is not their fault nor his, and may be our misfortune. There is one truth, however, beyond question, the man but represents the traits that flowed into him through them.



Essentially their qualities and those of their forebears are his in a new combination. They are not new-created, but continued.

As in a stream, new channels may be opened for the waters, a pressure given this way or that, and new uses made of its power; so in the individual we have hereditary force, plus training and direction.

Assuming that beyond all this there may be given to the man to manifest on earth a quality divine, some higher force of the Universal Spirit, even then his own receptiveness depends upon the preparation of his being by inheritance.

Of course it is a mystery. "Why," we ask, "are children of the same heredity so different in appearance and mentality?" We cannot tell. The waters of the stream have come from many sources, and apparently cannot mingle twice in the same proportions.

Here is a truth that is usually forgotten in the study of a man's heredity: that primary and essential traits of character are not to be measured by external circumstances,—amount and kind of one's possessions, place of residence or surroundings; neither by education in the common use of the term, *i.e.* schooling or book knowledge. They are manifested in small affairs rather than great; in the simplest relations of home, between

parents and children, brothers and sisters; in common neighborliness, ordinary labor, business and service. Yet, strangely enough, people persist continually in appraising character by circumstances, one's vocation and the mere possession of *things*. They are inclined to judge harshly of those who fail to achieve success according to their standards of success, even when they know little or nothing of the conditions under which the person struggled whom they judge.

How very foolish were some of the first biographers of Lincoln, and others who followed, copying without thought their ignorant statements regarding his heredity. They knew little or nothing about the matter, but, feeling that they must say something chose to say things disparaging. Apparently they thought to make their subject seem the greater by belittling those to whom he owed his being. Time, with careful investigation is sweeping to the rubbish heap each unworthy theory and statement of Herndon and his imitators.

So far, in every stream of Lincoln's ancestry, we find the waters clear and sweet, as if they flowed direct from mountain springs. We have not discovered one progenitor unworthy, measured by true standards,—steadfast courage, honesty and purity.

## WAS HE AN EDUCATED MAN?

MOST people, if asked about Lincoln's education would say probably, that he had very little. What they would have in mind would be the instruction of schools, which is only a minor part of training.

We may sum up the definitions given of education by a number of dictionaries with this statement: THAT COURSE OF TRAINING, PHYSICAL, MENTAL, MORAL AND RELIGIOUS, WHICH FITS THE INDIVIDUAL FOR THE WORK BEFORE HIM IN LIFE, AND FOR THE GREATEST USEFULNESS.

In detail, education cannot be the same for any two people, by reason of differing capacities and requirements. It is on the whole an individual matter, the result desired being the *fitting in* of a man to his best place.

How can we determine the value of a man's education except by the outcome of his life?

With regard to Abraham Lincoln, it is conceded that he was one of the very few super-great men of history. By what cause? First, of course, natural endowment. Second, education, *i.e.* the training that *drew out* his natural powers. Now the question is: What could have been added to

Lincoln's education that would have made him greater than he was? Are we sure that we could suggest one thing in the way of schooling that would have increased his usefulness? His life was full. Could anything have been added without subtracting something of possibly greater value? What experience of Lincoln's life should have been left out of the educational scheme,—*for him?*

Here is a man upon the highest mountain peak of fame, with few for company. Each of those climbed by his own path, providentially determined. Who shall say that one of them should have deviated from the trail? Each had his own education, physical, mental, moral and religious, that fitted him for the work that lay before him and the greatest usefulness.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION: WORK AND PLAY

“When I was eight years old, being large for my age, an ax was put into my hand, and from that till within my twenty-third year I was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument; less of course in plowing and harvesting seasons.”  
(Lincoln's Autobiography.)

Twelve growing years, of toilsome labor full;  
A towering stalwart form;  
Of fibre knit like ironwood or oak,  
To battle with the storm.

Sometimes a holiday. We see an original Boy Scout, walking with one or more companions over the hills, eighteen miles, to the Ohio River, sleeping on the ground, boating, fishing, taking home a goodly string hung over his shoulder. Near home, there was the creek and swimming-pool. He and his boy friends had all the essentials of a *gymnasium*. There was ground, plenty of it, and no signs, "Keep off the grass." There was the original horizontal bar—an extending limb of a tree, just high enough to reach with a standing jump; the swinging-bar,—a grapevine somewhere hanging down; the best climbing posts in the world,—smooth-bark hickorys or poplars, fifteen or twenty feet without a limb.

They had wrestling, running and jumping matches, played town ball and "quates" (quoits). They had a lot of fun, those boys; they could work when they worked and play when they played, and shout and sing and laugh without disturbance to their neighbors. All grew up with physical strength and power of endurance, Abraham most of all.

Don't ever waste your sympathies, my young gentleman or lady, pitying the boy who works in field or shop, or the girl who helps her mother in the house or garden—or her father in the field. Given beside some opportunity for play the work is made half play. If you have pity to spare, give

it to the boy or girl who doesn't have to work; if you have scorn, bestow it on the lazy.

Hard work, in reasonable amount, has no small value aside from physical development. It carries with it and increases self-respect, the sense of usefulness, the pride of accomplishment. The boy who follows the furrow has time for thinking. The while you see him in the field, walking barefoot behind his team, his mind may be engaged digesting the book he read last night. While developing his body he may be also exercising a brain that will some day make him a leader of men.

With all his work Lincoln never forgot how to play. When he had become a distinguished lawyer and statesman, after he had been in Congress, he played ball with the young men and boys. He often took a Saturday afternoon off, going to the woods followed by a troop of children who would do as he had done when young, run and explore, climb trees, gather nuts, and study the habits of animals and birds.

During the war, even, when he was borne down by anxiety and care, it is told that, out at the country place of Mr. Blair he joined the boys in a game of ball and ran the bases, laughing and shouting with the rest.

He could not have been the man he was without the education of *work*—and *play*.

## EDUCATION OF PATRIOTISM

LOVE of country was among the first things taught to Abraham. He tells the story that when he was very small, one day upon the road he met a man who told him he had been a soldier. "Immediately," he says, "I gave him whatever I had in my hand, a piece of bread perhaps, because I had been taught by my parents to honor the defenders of my country." They did not fail to tell him, we may be sure, that he was named for his grandfather Abraham—killed by the Indians, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. This grandfather had come with Daniel Boone, his friend, or closely following him, to explore Kentucky just before the close of the Revolutionary War. He had been a Captain of militia in Rockingham County, Virginia, as records show. His brother Jacob was a Lieutenant, present at the surrender of Cornwallis. This Abraham had been named for his uncle, a man distinguished in Pennsylvania, Abraham Lincoln of Berks County. An interesting account of him is given in the history of that County, with a reproduction of his signature. It resembles strikingly that of the

president. He was a member of the Legislature, the State Constitutional Convention and of the Convention that ratified the Constitution of the United States.

Had our Abraham's grandfather lived to old age he might have told his son and grandson many stories that were buried with him in the forest. Dennis tells that he asked the mother what the baby's name would be. "Abraham of course," she answered, "for his grandfather, who was killed by the Indians. He was a mighty smart man and not afraid of anything." This description is not ill-fitting to his grandson.

The pioneers had almost no records of their ancestry but all they had of legendary lore they told to Abraham, of brave and patriotic forefathers and mothers. And the first books that Abraham read besides the Bible were of patriotism. As elsewhere noted in this volume, nearly fifty years later Lincoln told the senators of the New Jersey legislature: "Away back in my childhood the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of Weems' "Life of Washington" . . . and *I remember*, the accounts there given of the battle-fields and struggles for the liberties of the country. I recollect *thinking, then*, boy though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for."



Aye, "the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts," Lincoln would not have been the man he was without his early education of *patriotism*.

#### EDUCATION OF TOOLS

A man was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.—Psalm 74-5.

"That most useful instrument," Lincoln wrote in his Autobiography. Yes, and most educational has been the Ax. There was never its equal among tools for a complete exerciser of the body, the physical development of a man. It can be of any size, from that of a giant to the hatchet for a child. As Abraham grew so did the ax he used, until with the swing of his long arms the tree was down before another lad would be half through. Without the ax there would have been no Lincoln as we know him, no "Rail-splitter" to lead his party. His father had "the best set of tools in the county," it was said, and Abraham learned their use. The pioneer did most of his own blacksmithing and repairing, sometimes making plows and harrows. Hence it was that Lincoln when in doubt later as to what he should do, "thought of being a blacksmith," as he states.\* They made

\* In Tarbell's "Life of Lincoln," Vol. I, there is a picture of a walnut cabinet, made by Abraham—"well put together," possessed, about 1895 by J. W. Wartmain, Evansville, Ind.

also common furniture, spinning-wheels and looms, —coffins many, cutting boards from the log with whipsaws before there were sawmills near. He was taught to be resourceful, meeting every accident or emergency without thought of failure. When later, on the Sangamon, the flatboat stuck upon a dam, he contrived an apparatus for lifting it over. He had his invention patented, the model of which may still be seen. No doubt he dreamed that he should make some money from it, not knowing how soon railroads would be built, and do away with transportation on small streams. As evidence of Abraham's mechanical skill and accuracy, consider that after the store "winked out" he "procured a compass and chain, studied Flint and Gibson (on surveying) a little, and went at it." "This procured bread and kept body and soul together," for some months, till he was elected to the legislature. His surveys are on record and have never been in question.

During the war he studied closely the mechanism of firearms, making himself an expert on the subject and became capable of criticizing new inventions offered to the War Department.

Yes, Lincoln could not have been the man he was without the education of tools, in popular phrase, "Manual Training."

## EDUCATION BY EXCLUSION

THE doctors have a method of diagnosis, as they tell us, "by exclusion." The condition present may arise, we will say, from one of ten causes. Selecting one, they find that there is a conclusive reason why it does not apply to the case in hand. It is therefore discarded, leaving nine; and so the process continues till only one is left, which must be *the* one. If there has been no fault of listing or of elimination, the conclusion is as sure as that two and two make four.

Ten thousand worlds there are within this world we tread, each with a million facts and questions. One can master but a few.

In education the human tendency seems to be to consider only *inclusion*. But *exclusion*,—determining what not to learn, is quite as important.

In the education of young Lincoln the Almighty saw to it that he was not compelled to learn a lot of things unrelated to the work that lay before him. He had some clear ideas himself about exclusion, as the following letter indicates:

Nov. 11, 1863.

HON. SECRETARY OF WAR:

DEAR SIR:

I personally wish Jacob Freese, of New Jersey, to be appointed Colonel for a colored regiment, and this regardless of whether he can tell the exact shade of Julius Cæsar's hair.

Lincoln knew colored men, and the sort of management needed to make soldiers of them. He knew Freese, and thought him fit for the job. That was enough. What was the use of putting him through an examination on a lot of subjects taught in books or schools?

We have had a president since Lincoln who had a wide range of knowledge on very many subjects and there was no limit to his writing or speech. He was, therefore, necessarily hurried, and sometimes inaccurate. With a lot of exclusion, and more intensive inclusion, we hazard the statement that although he was great he might have been greater; and almost certainly he would have lived longer.

A magnate of the great steel industry was sitting in a dental chair in a Chicago office. Looking out, he saw near by a big sign, "BUSINESS COLLEGE!" He snorted, then expressed his mind: "I've tried them out—their graduates," he said, "in our office we have wasted a lot of time unlearning them of what they got there, and trying to teach them what they ought to know. Not one

has made a success with us. I'll take the green boy every time, whose mind has not been clogged by a lot of misfitting ideas. Their system may be of value for some kinds of business, but not for ours."

A certain biographer has had almost hysteria over the fact that Abraham was unable to attend the school of Robert Dale Owen and his associates at New Harmony, Indiana, mourning for his lost opportunity of an education. Lincoln told Leonard Swett the reason as they were riding together in a buggy on "the circuit." His father, with true Lincolnian simplicity as regards business matters, had signed a note with a neighbor and in the end had it to pay. Abraham gave up going to school and worked out for a money wage to assist in paying this debt. He told the story cheerfully, with no expression of regret, for he had come later to have little respect for the school. While he was working for Crawford and others he was not filling his mind with matter to be unlearned afterward.

No, Lincoln would not have been the man he was without the blessing of exclusion in his early days.

## HE WENT TO SCHOOL—TO HIMSELF

NOT an educated man? No schooling? He went to school continually. He had many teachers. He found them everywhere, men, women and children with whom he associated on equal terms, being humble and willing to learn from the very least of them. Best of all he went to school to *himself*. He grew up with his teacher, and no teacher was ever more exacting. Having only one pupil who was ever in hand, he could exercise discipline as severely as he chose.

The pupil could never play hooky, or shirk his task without the teacher knowing it. And the teacher was so honest he would not allow the pupil the least self-indulgence that would interfere with his true education. He was from the first determined to make a man of him. And the pupil's mother had told him many times: "Abe, learn all you can. Make a man of yourself." Once she said: "You've just as good blood in your veins as Washington had, and you can rise in the world as he did." The reporter says: "I thought she was stretchin' it some." But she was not.

Very early this teacher, Himself, laid down certain rules. The first was: "Whatever you do, do thoroughly." "If a book is not worth studying thoroughly it is not worth reading at all. Whatever subject you begin with, master it completely before you quit." And so it came to pass that in his later life the pupil wrote: "I am never satisfied when I am handling a thought till I have bounded it north—and south—and east—and west." In other words, he went all around it to see where it connected; and then when he used it he would make no mistake in statement or argument. This rule of the teacher, "Be thorough," made him careful, determined to get at the exact truth of a matter, to be satisfied with nothing less: then, with every step he took he was on safe ground.

Under this rule, the pupil developed his mind just as he did his body, by steady, continued application.

With only a few books, the teacher was able to give his pupil the fundamentals, the foundation of a thorough education, *i.e.*, the training which "fitted him for the work before him in life, and the greatest usefulness."

Now this rule of Lincoln's teacher, thoroughness, is the one that any boy or girl must learn and follow if he or she is going to acquire an edu-

cation worth while. Above all things the teacher and pupil being one, it means *self-control*. That was the most valuable asset, probably, that Lincoln acquired in *going to school to Himself*.

Lincoln learned that he should not speak or act on mere impulse: that before doing things he should have thought out what the results of doing might be; or what effect the word spoken might have.



## HE SPECIALIZED

QUITE unconsciously at first, in going to school to himself, Lincoln specialized in his education. Both by choice and necessity he was narrowed down to the two great subjects most important for "the work that lay before him in life." He could hardly have branched off on other lines if so inclined. He had no books on Ichthyology, ornithology, or entomology, and could not have chosen to devote his life to the study of beetle-wings or the habits of toads.

So the first subject that seems to have engrossed his attention was one he could study chiefly without books. That was HUMAN NATURE. From the very start he seems to have taken deep interest in People. He just loved folks, folks of all sorts who were decent. He had much faith in them, too. There were only a few that he looked upon with suspicion, and toward none did he have hate or ill feeling. In this he was like his parents, who were neighbor-loving folk. All the people the boy knew were of the "common" sort. They were not poverty stricken, like some in cities, not in actual want, not starving, but in very moderate

circumstances. They owned their homes for the most part, had some land, with the bare necessities of life, few if any luxuries. And the most important part of Abraham's education was in the study of these people—their thoughts, their emotions and motives. Later, he said, he thought God must love the common people most, He had made so many of them. And all through life there was continued the study of this special subject. Practically all the books he ever read had a bearing directly upon this. Why read Shakespeare? Because he was the greatest specialist on human nature, his Works the greatest text book, aside from the Bible, on that subject. Therefore Abraham the teacher, chose for Abraham, the pupil, these two volumes that should be always at hand, on table or desk. There were many other books, of course, and periodicals, but all were subsidiary to these, contributory to the same education, bearing on the specialty. And there was no limit to the term of school, no vacations.

## HIS SECOND SPECIAL COURSE

THE second special course of Lincoln's education, was that of *The Political History of the United States*. This study began, according to his own testimony, very early—"away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read." He had begun, even then, to go to school to himself with the aid of printed teachers. Weems' "Life of Washington" was his "Primer" and "First Reader." This course of study continued without intermission to the day of his death.

It fitted in so closely with the course on human nature, that one could scarcely find a line dividing them. As he came to know more and more people, from the pent-in forest homes of Kentucky and Indiana forth to the wide sweep of western prairies, there grew within his mind the larger vision of his country. Those with whom he formed acquaintance in neighborhood life or on the Circuit, court-room or legislative hall, increasing audiences upon the field in great campaigns;—these all became to him the types of people everywhere, his fellow citizens of the Union. These

common people were to him as brethren who with their forefathers, pioneers of progress, had built the nation. Upon their patriotism, strength and courage, the perpetuity of our Government must depend. By this thinking there developed in his soul an ever deepening sense of the oneness and indivisibility of his country, a passionate love for it as a whole.

We have no record that he ever read through a history of the United States or pursued a systematic course marked out by anybody. He took his own course, as expressed by himself with reference to the law: "*I studied with nobody.*"

And so, going to school to himself in United States History, he did as the teacher wished. As any child should, he began with biography, choosing that of the greatest Revolutionary hero. Ere-long he got hold of the chief public documents, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence; reading and re-reading, pondering, till he almost knew them by heart. Later on, he read every notable speech by political leaders, and the debates in Congress on important questions. In this manner he stored his mind with facts, especially those bearing upon issues of his own time, in order that when he should speak it would be with certainty and authority. His question ever was, "What is the truth?"

He studied the structure of our Government as he would a building, till he knew its every bolt and beam, rock foundation and capstone. This, with his knowledge of citizenship, learned first hand in the manner described, made him invincible in argument.

His life experiences, all he read and learned, became contributory to this great scheme of specialized education. For all the limitations of his early life there was given full compensation in character, moral fibre, power of endurance, patience, and the indomitable will to overcome difficulties.—And little had he to unlearn.

## WHY HE STUDIED EUCLID

**S**PEAKING of himself, Lincoln says: "He studied and nearly mastered the six books of Euclid, since he was a member of congress."

His term in congress ended March 4th, 1849, three weeks past his fortieth birthday. So he was still going to school to Himself.

The work was done chiefly on his father's farm where he went for a stay of two or three months for that purpose. He could not very well do it in his law office or at home, because he needed solitude, a place for the utmost concentration of thought. To do this he had to let the law practice go, leaving it with the junior partner. He would not have done this so late in life, after being in congress, unless he had considered the study of Euclid a matter of considerable importance.

Where is the record of any other man doing the like? The explanation is that he looked upon it as a valuable collateral to his great special courses of study. One of these, as we have seen, was human nature, the knowledge of people,—the other politics, in the broadest sense of that term. They

were continuous studies that applied to his life work, always connected with the forward view.

Dooley said of Roosevelt in his charge on San Juan Hill, "He had wan eye on the Spaniards and the ither on the State of Noo Yorruk."

Without doubt, Lincoln had for many years one eye fixed on the United States Senate. He stated long after, when he was chief executive, that the great ambition of his life had been, not to be president, but to serve one full term as senator.

At this time, 1849-50, he had already been pitted against Douglas for more than twelve years, in the State Legislature, law practice and political campaigns. Long before the Great Debates they were consciously antagonists.

And what had the study of Euclid to do with this? Lincoln had learned by close observation, in congress particularly, that he was not up to the highest standard as a public speaker. He had been especially impressed by that wonderful product of the South, Alexander H. Stephens, whom he admired most among the orators of the House. When he retired from Congress he determined to prepare for whatever conflict or opportunity might come to him. He wished to further educate himself as a public speaker, and that was why he studied Euclid.

Why *Euclid* instead of Demosthenes or Cicero?

Lincoln saw that great issues were pending in the political field; that if he were destined to take a leading part he must accomplish two things: First, he must understand thoroughly the questions involved. Second, he must be able to reach the people with convincing argument that the views he held were true. He knew in his heart that he could never advocate a cause that was not right,—fully endorsed by his own conscience. He could not appeal to passion or prejudice, he could not do as he thought Douglas did, make plausible argument based on wrong premises or insidious half-truths. No, he must start with the whole truth as he understood it, though in the minority, and seek to convince his hearers by appealing to reason and conscience. In order to do this his logic must be without flaw. He must not make one careless or unconsidered statement, and, most difficult of all, he must use language so simple and plain that even the uneducated man to whom he spoke should comprehend his meaning. He must be able to demonstrate in words, even as arithmetic is demonstrated by figures.

From a child, he stated, he was seldom angry except for one thing: that people would speak in such a way that he could not tell what they meant, and he then determined that such a fault should never be his.



And that was why he studied Euclid. He had been told on good authority that this was the best book in existence on demonstration—the only example of pure logic.\* Therefore, he determined to study and master its contents. He was willing to take the time, to be apart from his family, to cut short his income, for what he considered the greater gain; the discipline of his mind, the improvement of his speaking.

He consulted his teacher, Himself, who told him he should go to a quiet place; out of doors, like his first school room in Indiana or Kentucky woods. There were trees and sward upon the farm, situated as he said “where prairie and timber joined.”

“I’ll go with you,” said the teacher, “and we’ll see it through.” “Yes,” replied the pupil, “it’ll be another cinch on Douglas.” And so it proved to be eight years later in the great debates.

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\* “When I was through with Euclid,” he says, “I thought I knew what demonstration meant.”

## DID EUCLID MAKE HIM PRESIDENT?

IT has often been stated that Lincoln's Cooper Institute speech made him President. Certain it is that by the effect it produced in the East, where he was not well known, he was placed in a position of advantage. A number of states, as usual, had "favorite sons" to present at the approaching convention and Lincoln now became their second choice. As between him and Seward, who led on the first ballot, a majority of the delegates were for Lincoln. The convention was held in Chicago, May 16-18, 1860. The Cooper Institute speech had been delivered February 27th, three months, less one week, before. Considered as a master work of reasoning, and by its results it stands without doubt the greatest political speech ever made in America. Douglas was then the leading aspirant for nomination on the Democratic ticket. Whatever statement he made was accepted by his followers as authoritative. In a recent speech at Columbus he had said:

"Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, even better, than we do now."

Lincoln said, opening his speech: "I fully endorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. . . . It furnishes a precise and agreed starting point. . . . It simply leaves the inquiry, 'What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?' [That of slavery extension into new territory]. Here we have something as definite as a proposition of Euclid. Accepted by both parties, nothing remains to consider but a complete statement of the facts of history as shown by the records. According to the premise laid down by Douglas himself, what the record showed would determine the conclusion of the whole matter. Arriving at that conclusion, controversy should cease by rule of logic. This was made inevitable by the assumption of Douglas that as the fathers thought then, so should we think now.

This placed him on dangerous ground, for it devolved on him to show that "the fathers" had thought exactly as he did and his platform declared. Whether he believed that he could make it so appear by misstatement of facts, or whether he himself was ignorant of the facts, we do not know, but he woke up a political mathematician who knew a problem when he saw it, and the one method of demonstration.

Lincoln proceeded to show what "the fathers understood" in a most complete manner. He

had the entire mass of facts arranged in perfect order; he knew of every act considered both by the confederation and framers of the Constitution. He knew by heart the names of all the members of different conventions, and how each one voted. Not only that, he traced the lives of nearly all, for a period of forty years afterward, to show how they voted in their respective states as well as in national assemblies—this to demonstrate exactly “what the fathers understood,” in accordance with the proposition Douglas himself had formulated. He swept the ground clean, leaving the Senator no standing place in his own chosen field of argument.

This speech was the final stroke to the aspiration of Douglas to head a united party. He had been discredited with the Southern leaders eighteen months before by his evasive answers to the questions so adroitly put to him by Lincoln at Freeport, in the joint debate. This great speech convinced them further that, politically, he was a demolished idol.

The Cooper Institute speech was published in whole or part by every Republican newspaper. It was quickly printed in pamphlet form and circulated as a campaign document. It contained a demonstration that people could understand. It turned clear light upon the darkened issues.

Would this speech have been possible, in its entirety, with all its force, if Lincoln had not mastered Euclid—at the age of forty lying under the trees, on a farm, “where timber and prairie joined”?

### THREE INCH YARDSTICKS

THE many discussions in books and periodicals of the question, "Was Lincoln a Christian?" appear to the writer to have little value. Do they not start too often with a narrow perspective and a question of definitions?

Ask first: "Did he in his life show forth the Christ spirit?" If the answer is "Yes, in larger measure, we believe, than any other public man of all the centuries," does not that settle the question once for all? If it be that the one thing needed most in the world is the spirit of Christ permeating all affairs, that must be certainly what Heaven desires.

Too often what the questioner has in mind is not the deep meaning of the spirit and the life, but, "Did he hold the particular beliefs about Christ that I hold myself?"

Only a few years ago the writer was asked by a minister of note: "Do you think it possible that Abraham Lincoln could be saved?" "Why not?" I replied. "Because," said he, "there is no evidence

that he ever made a personal, open confession of Christ as his Saviour."

To his mind, the confession of a man's whole life, the sacrifice even of that life for God's truth, counted for nothing without a formal declaration before the committee of a church.

Let us be candid. Is not the word "christian" in the very nature of the case an indefinite term? It did not originate with Christ or his apostles. We are told that "The disciples were first *called* christians at Antioch,"—*i.e.* they were so named by others, not themselves. It was applied to them no doubt with disrespect. Out of necessity the "disciples" accepted this new name, which has been applied since to all who named the name, thousands of sects, each one believing that itself held the best definition. And blood has flowed between them oftentimes through centuries to establish by force their claims of superiority, or infallibility.

It is quite probable that the Almighty Father does not think as we do in terms of human language. It is not likely that with Him the meaning of a law, physical or spiritual, depends on the turn of a word in any language; nor did he inspire translators with absolute precision.

Now we may be sure that Lincoln thought of all these things, and looking forward he had a

vision of better days to come, when all of christendom would stand together for the fundamental truths and be satisfied.

We should be thankful that he possessed the simple faith and courage to place his hand in that of the Almighty, relying on Him alone for strength and guidance.



## HIS RELIGIOUS CREED

**I**F the writer were asked to formulate the religious creed of Lincoln in theological terms, he could not do it; but, the statement coming nearest would be that he was a Calvinistic Universalist. It would hardly be possible to find two words more fitting.

He certainly believed emphatically in the Divine decrees, even in ordinary affairs. Surely he was not insincere—he was never that—when he wrote to Joshua Speed, July 4, 1842:

“I believe God made me one of the instruments of bringing your Fanny and you together, which union I have no doubt, he foreordained. Whatever he designs he will do for me yet. ‘Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord’ is my text just now.”

He believed inflexibly that Divine retributive justice would be meted out to individuals and to nations. Read this, spoken most solemnly from the depths of his aching heart, in the second Inaugural address. Deploring the war with all its horrors, long drawn out and still unfinished, he speaks of the great individual and national sin that he believes is responsible—human slavery.

Quoting scripture at the beginning and close of his statement, he says: "Woe unto the world because of offenses . . . but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." . . . "Fondly do we hope—ferently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue till all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as it was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

Is not this a terrible indictment, equal to any pronounced by one of the old prophets against Israel?

Face to face with the American people, this was what he dared say. No consideration of policy, nor fear of offending, could prevent his speaking what he believed to be the truth as to God's inflexible justice.

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Over against the Calvinistic view of foreordination and the Decrees stands the opposite pole of his creed. However sure the punishment of evil-doing, even to the extent of blood atonement for national sins, as shown in the Inaugural, he could

not get the consent of his mind to shut the door of hope for any soul. This was the principle that caused him to commute the offenses of young soldiers, to give them another chance. He seldom pardoned outright but held them under suspended sentence. To end their lives seemed to him sheer waste and poor economy, human or divine.

The Rev. Erasmus Manford, a distinguished Universalist divine, held a series of debates in Springfield, with a Mr. Lewis, taking the affirmative of the proposition of "the restitution of all things to God," *i.e.* that nothing should be lost in the finality. Lincoln attended these lectures each day and night, listening attentively and nodding often to the points that Mr. Manford made. He said the doctor had the better of the argument, placed on a scripture basis. He respected Mr. Manford in a broad-minded way, for his ability, courage and honesty, as he did the great Bishop Simpson of the Methodist church, Beecher of the Congregationalist, and Dr. Campbell, the doughty old seceder from the Presbyterians.

He held no brief for any sect, but recognized the truth that any creed, to live, must have something in it worth while. At the same time he may have thought it unfortunate that any body of Christians should base its existence and its name on one particular idea.

## HIS RELIGION

LINCOLN stated repeatedly that if any church would limit its creed to the simple statement of Jesus Himself, summing up the Law and the Prophets, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy mind," and "thy neighbor as thyself," leaving the individual free to formulate for himself what further belief he would, based on his own interpretation of the Word, that church he could give adherence to whole-heartedly and would gladly join. He could not bring himself, he said, to formally accept a creed with mental reservations. Of course he would have freely accepted the eleventh commandment of Christ Himself: "That ye love one another." This might seem to be embodied in the Ten, but there's a difference. It represents a higher principle. It is not measured by self love, but is like the divine, unlimited.

Mr. Lincoln had been brought up in a region and within a period especially given to religious controversy. Much of this to his clear reasoning appeared to be of no importance. Therefore, as an honest man, entitled to the privilege of thinking

for himself, he held aloof from all the sects engaged in it. But he read his Bible habitually and pondered its precepts, always with a practical application.

Mr. Rankin, his one time law-student, author of the book "Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln" says of him:

"He lived his religion. It was a constant, pervasive part of the man." But: "It was so intermingled and incorporated with the other elements of his unique personality as to defy complete analysis or description."

He reports that Mrs. Lincoln stated: "Mr. Lincoln's religion was poetry," and adds, "she was probably correct. If so it was of an idealism akin to that of those who 'do always behold the face of my Father in Heaven.'"

He had more scriptural truth at command, for immediate application to affairs, public or private, than nine out of ten of the preachers of his time. He has incorporated more religious truth into speeches, letters and state papers than all the other presidents up to this day.

This spirit of independence on his part was entirely free from pride or self-assertion, or any belligerent feeling. He was simply and modestly true to his own conscience. He knew very well the benefits that come from association and or-

ganized effort, and laid no blame on others for their peculiar tenets. He was absolutely democratic in religion as in politics, allowing freely to every man the right of opinion and choice.

And he always helped to support one organization or another. He held a church pew in accord with the choice of his wife, attended services himself, encouraged the minister in his work, and gave his moral support as far as possible to all the churches; to every organization that had for its object the uplift of humanity. He was particularly interested in the advance of the temperance cause, that he upheld not only by his words but personal example of the strictest sort. Let it be shown where any of these acts were inconsistent with a devout inner life.

## A CHURCH MEMBER AT LARGE

WHEN a state is entitled by its population to one more Congressman, and the districts can not be at once readjusted to meet the requirement, there is elected on occasion a Congressman at large who represents the whole people.

It may be said of Lincoln that by his universal sympathy, his complete tolerance, his catholicity of spirit, he was a churchman at large for the United States during the war. All looked to him, came to him, advised with him, more freely than they could have done had he been formally connected with any one of them. May not the Almighty have had a purpose in this also?

And the Quakers came. The aged woman held his hand and said: "Thee must not think thee stands alone, friend Abraham. We are all praying for thee. . . . The Lord hath appointed thee, all our hearts are with thee, and the people love thee. Take comfort; God is with thee." And he replied, "I know it. It is not hope I have, but knowledge, that He is sustaining me. . . . Otherwise my heart would have broken long ago. . . . It holds me to my work. . . . This has been a hard

day. I was almost overwhelmed when you came in. You have given a cup of cold water to a very thirsty and grateful man. . . . God bless you all."

The Baptists came and he could say, "I thank you for adding to the effective and almost unanimous support which the Christian communities are giving to the country and to liberty. . . . Indeed, it is difficult to conceive how it could be otherwise with any one professing Christianity."

To the delegation of the Presbyterian General Assembly he could say: "It has been my happiness to receive testimonials of a similar nature from, I believe, all denominations of Christians. . . . Relying, as I do, upon the Almighty Power, and encouraged as I am by the resolutions which you have just read, with the support which I receive from Christian men, I shall not hesitate to use all the means at my command to secure the termination of this rebellion."

To the Methodist delegation he could say: "Nobly sustained as the Government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. Yet without this it may be fairly said that the Methodist Episcopal Church not less devoted than the best, is by its greater numbers the most important of all. It is no fault of others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field,



more nurses to the hospital, and more prayers to heaven than any. God bless it, and all the churches, and blessed be God, who, in this our great trial giveth us the churches." Was not Lincoln entitled to be enrolled a member of the church at large?

## HIS GREAT SERMON

WHEN Mr. Lincoln delivered his Cooper Institute speech, he was fifty-one years and three weeks old. He had often spoken of himself as "an old man." Two years before, during one of the joint debates he paused to read from a document held in his hand. A man in the audience called out jeeringly, "Put on your specs!" "Yes," he replied, in a good-natured tone, "I am compelled to do so, for I am an old man." Evidently his life seemed to him already long, for he had been at hard work, with brawn or brain, since childhood, beginning "in his eighth year," as he elsewhere said.

Being the greatest living preacher of political truth, Mr. Lincoln was inclined to begin his discourse with a *text*, and as a lesson for all preachers it may be noted that he stuck close to it to the end.

The text was taken from a speech recently made by Douglas referring to the paramount question: "Has the national government the constitutional right to exclude slavery from United

States territories? If so, should the right be exercised?" On both propositions Mr. Douglas had, on his own motion, and probably without considering where it might lead him, given out the text that Lincoln used. "Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

"Very well, accepted," says Lincoln.

The whole responsibility, we see, rests with "The Fathers." All we have to do is to learn definitely what "the fathers understood." (We will take the liberty of numbering several of the leading questions.)

FIRST: "What is the form of government under which we live?"

"The Constitution of the United States." That "consists of the original, framed in 1787 . . . and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were added in 1789."

SECOND: "Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution?"

"The 'thirty-nine' who signed the original instrument may fairly be called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is fair to say that they represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time."

THIRD: "What is the question which, according

to the text, those fathers understood 'just as well, or better than we do now'?

"It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?"

Please note the careful wording and inclusiveness of this question.

Upon this Senator Douglas holds the affirmative and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue: and this issue, this question, is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood, "better than we."

FOURTH: "Let us now inquire whether the 'thirty-nine,' or any of them, ever acted upon this question; and if they did, how they acted upon it."

Do not these propositions appear to you like a mathematical, Euclidian base, for the exact solution of a problem? It is a foundation without flaw for the argument of fact that follows.

After quoting several instances, where members of the "thirty-nine" had voted for slavery prohibition, including the "ordinance of '87," Mr. Lincoln adds the following "clincher":

"In 1789, by the first Congress that sat under the Constitution an act was passed to enforce the ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of

slavery in the Northwestern territory. The bill for this act was reported by one of the 'thirty-nine'—Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without a word of opposition and finally passed both branches without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this congress there were *sixteen of the 'thirty-nine'* fathers who framed the original Constitution." Mr. Lincoln gives their names, one being James Madison, afterward President of the United States. "Again, George Washington, another of the 'thirty-nine,' then President, approved and signed the bill."

## FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Of all true words occasion fitting,  
By men of honored names;  
His stand apart, like apples golden,  
In silver shining frames.

PROVERBS 25 : 11.

ONE of the greatest lines that Edwin Markham ever wrote was this, in his ode to Lincoln:  
*"His words were oaks in acorns."*

It is true. Planted deep enough to take root in the thought of mankind anywhere, they grow into trees of righteousness—and the trees shall be like those of the Apocalypse, "for the healing of the Nations."

On the fourth of March, 1865, the President delivered his second Inaugural Address. It is the briefest document of its kind save one, and the greatest, unless we except his first Inaugural. It was written on the spiritual heights of patriotism. There is not to be found within it one touch of the ego.

The greatest battle of the war, that of BALLOTS, had been fought and won, for the UNION. And the Address is a psalm of praise, not at all for his

personal success, but for the Blessing upon his country. He accepts the election as God's promise of victory for the great cause to which he is soon to give "the last full measure of devotion."

The storms of passion rage about him, the war is coming to its climax. But his great spirit rides above the storm. He knows about the Hate, the disposition of Revenge, the cruel lust for punishment soon to ensue—in the name of Justice.

Looking calmly forward to the coming issue, he speaks four words—

"WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE."

Let none of these things have place he means, in our settlement with the Southern people. Let love prevail above all else. Let Kindness govern with your so-called justice, O my countrymen!

Having in mind the bitterness of the political contest, knowing of all the cruel, malicious things that had been said of himself and his co-workers, of the natural resentment that would be felt by those of his own party, he adds four words more,—

"WITH CHARITY FOR ALL."

How they harmonize like musical notes with the words of Christ and the song of the angels:

"Peace on Earth—Good will toward men."

"Blessed are the Peacemakers."

"If ye forgive not men their trespasses. . . ."

Lincoln knew that many of the North were

hating the people of the South: that many of the South also hated those of the North. "Rise above all this," was the soul of his message: "Love alone can make us one people." And soon his voice was stilled, his words unheeded, often disregarded. It has taken more than a half century for their realization.

Is there not a message for us each this day in those eight words?—to crush out petty thoughts and selfish motives, to widen our vision of life and duty, enlarge the spirit of love toward all around us, and to all the world?



## TO ALL PATRIOTS

**I**N the holiday time we gave what seemed to be an appropriate message taken from the second inaugural address, March 4, 1865, just one month and ten days before his removal from the earth.

The text consisted of two clauses that rank with the very beatitudes of Christ; are in truth but a new expression of His Spirit—two clauses of four words each—

With Malice Toward None;  
With Charity for All.

Immortal words, destined to shine evermore on the scroll of the ages. Just before them, closing the preceding paragraph, is a quotation from scripture (Ps. 19:9): "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

The eight words refer strictly to a state of mind—of feeling, of motive. They are an appeal to the heart, for greater love that shall displace hate and overcome all prejudice and resentment and revengefulness: an appeal both to North and South.

Then, with only a semicolon between, comes a further statement calling to Action: "With firm-

ness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in: to bind up the Nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”

So ends the Inaugural message. Read the words over and over again, dear reader. Try and absorb their full meaning to our time. Let us not forget his recognition of “The judgments of the Lord,” the plea for light and guidance, “as God gives us to See.”

But we are to *act* upon this guidance. We must strive to “*finish the work*”: There must be no halt, no “backward step,” no surrender of principle, no compromise with wrong. What a lesson for our country, the world—and for each one.

Should not Lincoln's words, freighted with deep meaning, come to us all like a divine message?

## OTHER NATIONS

AS you read the closing paragraph of Lincoln's last deliverance to the American People that comes like a benediction after prayer, did you reflect in particular on these words—"to do all that may achieve a lasting peace among ourselves, AND WITH ALL NATIONS?"

He had the world-wide view, that was never lost or obscured by the clouds that covered our own land. From his early boyhood, wherever he had lived, he was known for the spirit of neighborliness. He realized always, and never forgot that nations were but neighbors who ought to dwell in harmony one with another. He would accept war only as a bitter and dire necessity, for conservation of the Right,—“as God gives us to see the Right.” When at the Civil War's beginning, the Secretary of State lost his mental balance for the moment, and would send a note to England not carefully worded, Lincoln promptly erased each questionable word, and freed the document of every expression that might possibly irritate or offend.

The Secretary thought as the fool thinketh, as rulers through the centuries have thought, to avert war at home by making war abroad. His foot slipped and he was falling, till the President caught him by the arm, and held him steady. So did he later, at a most critical moment when many lost their poise with temper and excitement, in the Mason-Slidell affair. "Keep cool," he said in substance, "and reflect. Remember England is our neighbor, with equal rights; consider—put ourselves in her place. Suppose that she had boarded one of our ships and taken therefrom two passengers who happened to be persons obnoxious to her, bound on some errand she disapproved. It would not be right for her, neither is it right for us. We must give up these men. It may be for the moment humiliating to do so, but it is better to wound our pride than do a wrong."

Lincoln would have hailed with joy a possible treaty of world peace. But he would not have compromised right or agreed with any injustice to obtain such an agreement.

As in the making of a flatboat on the Ohio or the Sangamon, he would insist that every piece of timber should be sound.

God knows, dear friends, we want world union—and perpetual peace thereby, but we shall not

consciously endorse a wrong that any neighbor would inflict upon another. Honest we should be in whatsoever we endorse, let come what will. So Lincoln stood, and so stand we, let us hope and trust.

## GUARDED SPEECH

WHAT a lesson public men might learn, and others too, by the study of Lincoln's TACT and SILENCE. By this is meant his careful avoidance of the pitfalls of speech either spoken or written. There is nothing more dangerous to the reputation of a man in high place than ill-considered or impulsive statements. Even the foolish statement of another man, allowed to pass unrebuked or uncorrected, has defeated one candidate for the presidency of the United States. A minister of the gospel, tempted by a phrase, spoke three words in an address of welcome to his candidate; and the candidate not being quick to realize their dangerous significance, and to protest them instantly, they flew like multiplied arrows to the voters of New York, the pivotal state, and lost the election for him and his party. "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" made Burchard the Nemesis of Blaine and handed out the chiefest office to Grover Cleveland.

We may be quite sure, I think, that the words would not have escaped the attention of Lincoln. He had a wonderful sense of the fitness of things,

and quickness to see the power for good or evil in a phrase.

In this same city of New York, twenty-four years before Burchard killed Blaine with three R's, the attempt was made to trap Lincoln into a political speech, while he was on his pre-inaugural trip. He parried their friendly but unwise effort in this fashion:

"I did not understand that I was brought here to make a speech: that being in this room where Daniel Webster and Henry Clay had made speeches, I should also say something worthy of myself and this audience . . . of course, I could . . . make an argument on a political question without much preparation. But I have been occupying a position of SILENCE—of avoiding public speaking—and public writing. . . . I am brought before you now and asked to make a speech when you all approve more than anything else that I have been keeping silence." He was cheered, and then continued: "It seems to me that the response you give to that remark ought to justify me in closing right here.

"I have said several times on this journey, and now repeat, that when the time comes I shall take the ground that I think is right—right for the North, for the South, for the East, for the West—for the whole country. Have I said enough?"

Loud cries of "No, no!" and "three cheers for Lincoln!"

"Now, my friends," he responded, "there appears to be a difference of opinion between you and me, and I really feel called upon to decide the question myself." This ended the "speech."

Of course he had been speaking to many audiences, and would speak again; but only as a patriot to patriots; not with regard to details of policy or argument of questions. He was appealing to the hearts of the people, to all that made for unity, and he was trying not to touch the keys of discord anywhere. At least three Presidents since have not been as wise.



## FAREWELL

(SPRINGFIELD, ILL., FEB. 11, 1861).

*Farewell for aye* to this love hallowed home,  
Where all thy sons were born:  
Bespeak the prayers of these, thy neighbor-friends,  
—Tear-dimmed their eyes this morn.

A PRAIRIE town of plain buildings, with muddy streets, a house of tender memories, well out toward the surrounding farms. The family of five: three boys there were—a fourth had been.

Scant sleep their parents found that night, with heartstrings tense.

First light of morn that pierced the drizzling rain.

Then splashing sound of hoofs and wheels: one backward look—forever.

A waiting train, eastbound; loud-breathing engine; a weatherbeaten face looks out and backward from its window.

Upon the rearward platform stands the man of towering height and strength.

Many have gathered at this early hour to say

“Good-by” and hear his parting words. With tears upon his cheek, he speaks:

“My Friends: No one not in my position can realize the sadness I feel at this parting. To these people I owe everything. Here I have lived for more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, here one of them lies buried. I know not when if ever I shall see you again. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which has devolved on any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, on which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine blessing. On the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support and guidance. I hope that you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. Again, I bid you an affectionate farewell.”

He bowed his head and turned away, his hand upraised with blessing. He could not hear the sobs that followed while the train went forth.

Through many miles, from the window he beheld familiar scenes. At Decatur, while the crowds were cheering, his eye sought out the ground where one-and-thirty years before, his wagon stood, with the panting oxen just come from the Indiana

woods. And he had passed, but half an hour before, the very spot where he had helped to plow and fence their first brave homestead on the prairie.

And now his eyelids close for thought. Tomorrow—on his birthday; in the Capitol of another state, shall be a noble speech.

## ON CHILDHOOD READING

ON this same pre-inaugural trip of which we have been writing, among the places visited was Trenton, New Jersey. Here, as elsewhere, Mr. Lincoln spoke briefly on patriotic themes, keeping "silent" as to political policies in accordance with his determined plan. His first thought was of local history as related to the Revolution, when Washington made the celebrated crossing of the Delaware River to capture the British army, of Hessians chiefly, at daybreak. After a few introductory sentences he said:

"Away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, that few of you perhaps have ever seen, 'Weems' Life of Washington.'" I REMEMBER all the accounts there given of the battlefields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed itself in my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river, the hardships endured at that time, all impressed my mind most vividly, and you men know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longest. And I

*recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something even more than national independence; something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time . . . that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated."*

There are other important lessons contained in this speech, but I wish here to emphasize one in particular.

Where was this boy when he read of "that struggle," and did so think about it?

He was in a log cabin home, or lying under a tree near by, in the woods of the West. There was not a schoolhouse probably within twenty miles of where he lived. How old was he? Not beyond his tenth year, for he says, "My earliest days of being able to read."

Who was his teacher? His own mother, who was taken from him when he was nine years and eight months old. She it was who taught him to read, and with the reading told him of his own patriotic ancestors.

And what was the "small book," this "Weems" of which he speaks?

It was a warm-blooded, enthusiastic story of Washington and the war. The critics said that in many details it was inaccurate, and they "laughed it out of court," as the work of a visionary writer.

But it was vivid, entertaining, essentially true, the story with a SOUL. The influence of this book on the mind and heart of one boy who grew up to speak the words above quoted, was well worth the cost of its publication, and a full offset of its faults. Moreover, we know very well that thousands of other lads were inspired likewise, and were made better citizens by the story it told.

What lesson, parents? First, that the vital elements of education depend not on schools, but the home, and *you*. Second, that there is no estimating the power for good of one "small book" well absorbed. And the lifelong influence: Lincoln says, "I recollect thinking *then*." Read those four words over a few times, and let their meaning sink in. What patriotic book is in your home? How much is it being read by your boy, your girl, yourself?

What was the mental food of that man who grew to be the greatest of his century?

Few books, but choice, read o'er and o'er again,  
Before the fagot light;  
Or in the Sabbath stillness of the woods,  
And pondered, day and night.

Treasure the books that are worth re-reading:  
and that make you think—and THINK.

## BREVITY OF SPEECH

LINCOLN could make a long speech when occasion demanded, in a political campaign when the opinions of assembled hundreds or thousands had to be taken account of separately. But he never for a moment lost sight of the main issue involved. Read through his "Complete Works," and you will find that usually his deliverances were short. Brevity and concentration characterized the speeches he made on this journey to Washington that we have been following.

In order to get the full meaning of his utterances, one needs to read slowly, thoughtfully, and repeat, as if studying scripture.

The speech to the Senate of New Jersey quoted from in our last paper, deserves to be preserved as a whole among his classics. Following the reference to our Revolutionary "struggle" note the following: "I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated." (How?) "in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made."

Liberty? Yes, but not license, not disruption,

not overthrow, not destruction of the Union, but liberty under law. That was what he meant, what he stood for and was determined to enforce. And that is exactly what we mus' stand for now. The majority shall Rule—with a great, big *R*.

His personal relation? "I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this His almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle." This, as we know, involved another and greater struggle, just then impending, one he hoped to avert, but from which, if inevitable, he would not flinch.

And now note his frankness, his simple friendliness, ignoring of party spirit: "I learn that the majority of this body is of gentlemen who, in the exercise of their best judgment in the choice of a chief magistrate, did not think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they come forward here to greet me as the constitutionally elected President of the United States—as citizens of the United States, to meet the man who, for the time being, is the representative of the majesty of the Nation—united by the single purpose to perpetuate the Constitution, the Union, and the liberties of the people. As such, I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do did I believe it were tendered to me as an individual."



In his address immediately following, to the House of Representatives, he made a statement distinctly applicable to our own time: "The man does not live who is more devoted to peace than I am, none who would do more to preserve it, but it may be necessary to put the foot down firmly." (Prolonged cheers followed this expression). "If I do my duty and do right, you will sustain me, will you not?" (Cries of "Yes, yes, we will!")

"I trust that I may have your assistance in piloting the Ship of State through this voyage, surrounded by perils as it is, for if it should suffer wreck now, there will be no pilot ever needed for another voyage."

Four years and two months later Whitman wrote:

O Captain! My Captain! Our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weathered every rack,  
The prize we sought is won;  
. . . But O heart! heart! heart! the bleeding drops of red  
Where on the deck my Captain lies, fallen cold and dead.

## STANTON'S VISION

**I**N the "Complete Works" of Lincoln and other collections, some hundreds of little telegrams or letters are not included. They were considered hardly worth while, being so monotonously alike. Why should people be interested, the compilers thought, in fifty pages of matter like the following, brief deliverances, referring to one subject, *viz.*: the commutation of death sentences of common boy soldiers?

TO MRS. MARY MCCOOK BALDWIN, NASHVILLE, TENN.:

This is an order to the officer having in charge to execute the death sentence upon John S. Young, to suspend the same until further order.

A. LINCOLN.

Some one might ask: "Who were these people, and of what interest their case to us?"

Well, we know this, the case was of vital interest to them and of interest to the heart of Lincoln. There is no record we believe that "the further order" in such cases was ever issued.

TO MAJOR THOMAS, CHATTANOOGA, TENN.:

Suspend execution of Young Perry, from Wisconsin, condemned for sleeping on his post, until further orders.

On February 12, 1864, his birthday, Mr. Lincoln's mind was particularly burdened with the case of one James Taylor, fearing that the order might not reach in time the officer in charge. He sent several dispatches to Boston and New York, one of which was to Gen. Dix. He seemed to wish to celebrate his own birthday by saving a life.

And Stanton stormed, saying Lincoln was breaking down the discipline of the army. And Lincoln knew better. He was saving boys, nearly all under 18, and their broken-hearted mothers.

Then there came a night. High pillowed on a borrowed bed lies the unconscious Chief, measuring out with stertorous breath the few remaining hours of life. Those who have a right are there; one, the inflexible War Lord, his heart torn as never before. Through the long hours, with head bowed upon his hands, he sits and thinks upon the past,—and the future. He has new vision of the planes of life. He sees the Chief upon the higher, himself the lower; he, feared, respected for his force: the Chief, bound to the souls of men with cords of love, now and evermore. They heard him speaking once as to himself, "Yes, he was the Master of us all, who ruled with Love in highest place."

Now light is breaking on the eastern sky. A door seems opening through the corridors of Time.

The room is silent except for sobs. A few faint breathings, and the bells will toll. The Warrior's vision is complete. The deep tones of his voice pronounce an immortal tribute:

“NOW HE BELONGS TO THE AGES.”

## THE UNSELFISH MAN:—WANTS LESS, NOT MORE

ONLY once I think it is recorded that Lincoln sued for the collection of a fee. The party was a wealthy corporation, the Illinois Central Railroad, and the fee was for unusually valuable service. The bill was paid with costs. Lincoln felt that it would be an unrighteous thing to yield the point. It was the principle involved that he cared for more than the fee, though he needed that very much.

As a rule his feeling was with respect to any fee, "This is enough," or "It should be less." Another man would say, "I fear I am not getting enough." Lincoln said: "I fear I shall be taking too much." If there was any question about the matter he always preferred to give the benefit of doubt to the other party.

Here is an illustrative story, that we think has not been heretofore published. It is given us by the Rev. W. S. Marquis, who, when young, lived in Bloomington, Illinois. It was told him as a personal experience by Mr. Flagg, a merchant of that city. Bloomington, County Seat of McLean,

was an important point on "The Circuit" travelled by Lincoln and other attorneys in the early days. Mr. Flagg related that once he had a case in court involving several thousand dollars' worth of property. It had hung on year after year, his lawyers not being able apparently to untangle the legal knots involved. Meeting Lincoln in town, he asked him to take charge of the matter, thinking that within a year he might get matters straightened out. After a short investigation, Mr. Lincoln made a motion in court which resulted in a speedy settlement that was highly satisfactory. Then the merchant expected that a statement for legal service would come soon by mail, but it did not. After some months Mr. Lincoln came into the store, apparently for just a friendly chat. The man supposed he had a collection in mind, but he made no reference to it. As he started to go away the merchant called him back to say that he wished to settle his bill. Lincoln seemed surprised, then said, after thinking a moment: "O, that motion I made in court,—that was a small matter, only took a few minutes. I quite forgot about it." "But it was not a small matter for me," replied the man, "and I want a bill for your services." "O well," said Lincoln, "if you feel that way about it, give me ten dollars." The merchant turned to his desk and wrote a check

for a hundred, but it was only by urgent insistence that he could induce Lincoln to accept it.

It may be that, as Lamon said, Lincoln lacked "money sense." But if he had possessed it—the least disposition to reach for "more," would he have been the Lincoln he was, and is to us now?

What men in all history have gripped the heart of mankind? Those who were satisfied with less and little, or those who wanted more? There is great spiritual value in the non-acceptance of money, especially when the payer is in greater need than the receiver, or has needy ones dependent upon him.

There was once a Carpenter in Palestine who became the preacher of very plain truth. We presume that for some years he worked for meager wages. For all his worldly possessions the soldiers cast lots. But who may estimate the wealth he gave to mankind in perpetuity? Often the question is asked: "What would Jesus do?" We may also wisely ask with reference to political and business life, "What would Lincoln do?—or say?"

## THE MAN WHO STAYED WITH HIS JOB

**I**T was characteristic of Lincoln from childhood that if he undertook a thing he stayed with it till he completed it. If he cut down a tree and cleaned it up, trunk, limb and top, the job was done thoroughly. Speaking of this, he said, long afterward, "Up to my twenty-third year I was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument"—the ax.

There is great discipline in the school of tools, and every boy—and girl—should have tutelage in it. There is no better instrument in the world than the woodman's ax for one who is able to handle it. The pupil learns to strike straight in a given line, and follows to the end a definite plan. Abraham Lincoln went at study in the same way. If it was a spelling book, when he got through with it he could spell. Nobody could turn him down.

The first borrowed grammar he learned practically by heart.

When he was nearly forty years old, and had been a term in Congress, he went out to his father's farm and studied Euclid, lying under the



trees, till he had mastered five of the six books; and, as he said, thought he knew the meaning of the word "demonstrate."

He did not stay long with his early venture in trade, for which he had no fitness; but he stayed fifteen years with the debts contracted, till every dollar was paid with high interest.

He was not over forward in taking new responsibilities, but once assumed, he never flinched or shifted them. When he went to Washington in 1861,<sup>5</sup> no one knew better than he the measure of his problem. Addressing the Legislature of New York, he said: "While it is true that I hold myself the humblest of all individuals who have been elevated to the Presidency, I have a more difficult task to perform than any of them."

Nevertheless, when he took the oath of office a few days later, and read in clear tones his first Inaugural address, the hand that took the reins of government did not tremble.

A few days later he received an astonishing letter from his Secretary of State, submitting "Some thoughts for the president's consideration." In this he stated five propositions, the first being: "We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy, either domestic or foreign." (For the letter entire see Nicolay and Hay, Vol. III, 445-7, or Tarbell, Vol. III, 29.)

Seward proposed that to avoid war between the states, we should at once evacuate Fort Sumpter, seek or demand explanations of Great Britain, Russia, Spain and France, and send agents into Canada, Mexico and Central America, to stir up opposition to over-sea governments. This "policy" could have no other logical result than to embroil us in war with several nations at once: All for the purpose, and with the hope of diverting the South from its plan of disunion, and bringing the sections together for common defence. Then he proposed that if the president did not wish to assume the responsibility of carrying out such a policy, he would do it for him. "It is not my especial province" he wrote, "but I neither seek to evade or assume it." Whoever now reads this strange document can only thank our stars for the choice of the convention in Chicago, nearly a year before.

To a man not completely master of himself, the like of this would have produced an explosion: but the answer was very simple and modest, though positive. It was to the effect that having been chosen by the people to do a certain work, and having taken his oath to perform it, the president could only go forward in the line of duty, as duty should be revealed from day to day. The secretary wisely took his place in the cabinet

and stayed with great usefulness through the entire administration of Lincoln and that of his successor.

The explanation of his conduct is not hard to discover. He was in a panic over the state of the country. He had been grievously disappointed with his failure to receive himself the highest office. He apparently overrated his own abilities, and much underrated those of his chief.

A few weeks later he wrote to his wife, "The president is the best of us."

Lincoln, having put his hand to the work, would never let go if he lived, till the work was done. He stayed right at headquarters, attending strictly to HIS business. He never went perambulating 'round the country making speeches, though often urged to go. He had a better use for his energies. He knew the central point of his duty and stuck to it.

Once when he was very weary, he said with a plaintive smile, "I wish that George Washington or some other of the old worthies, might come and take this place a few days and let me go for a rest."

With the exceptions of going to Philadelphia to help open the Sanitary Commission, and to Gettysburg, he went nowhere till the war was nearly ended; when he made a trip to Richmond, not without risk.

## THE MONUMENT OF LIVING STONES

**D**URING two decades it was my good fortune to be in Springfield every second year. Two places there I never failed to visit: one, the Home place, so dear to Lincoln's heart, that he had looked upon for the last time that dismal February morning in the year 1861. Often this would be my morning walk before breakfast. I would stand before it for a few moments, seeing in imagination the tall man going in or out, "the boys" following or holding to his hands and coat.

Another place I never failed to see once on each visit was the great and noble monument, about two and a half miles distant. Seeing it many times one grew to love it more and more, every stone within and each figure upon it, for all they typify of patriotism, loyalty and sacrifice.

It has a beautiful setting, where prairie and timber meet; and in May, the time of my visit,

The verdure new is springing,  
The birds are sweetly singing;  
A joyful chorus ringing,  
To the sky.

But now I am thinking of another monument, one that Stanton perhaps visualized upon that

night in the still room of death. I am thinking of those telegrams that take so little space on paper yet filled a great place in many lives. I think of them as living stones, electrified with hope, and joy and peace. They make a monument no man's hand may fashion for another to behold, but that each may visualize for himself.

Think of those silent messages winging swiftly, by day or night from the operator's keyboard in Washington, dictated at odd moments in between the weightiest affairs; flying over mountain and valley, down by the moonlit waters of the Mississippi it may be, tapping at the door of some military prison, whispering to a general in his tent or to some officer of a firing squad the words, "Stay! Do not execute!" And somewhere near, with sleepless eyes fixed on ceiling or sky, there lies a boy to whom the words are repeated; and he knows that on the morrow he shall live and not die. Two words are on his lips, repeated over and again—"Mother,"—"Lincoln."

Imagine that several hundred stones of granite were gathered together; that into each stone were chiseled the words of one life-saving dispatch; that these were builded together in such manner that not one inscription should be hid, which should be the capstone? I am not sure but it would be the one of William Scott, who died upon

the battlefield a few months following his reprieve, with Lincoln's letter bound upon his heart: a letter as of a father to a son enjoining him to duty.

But all these telegrams should be worthily preserved. Living stones they are, brilliants shining on the printed pages of a history that is sacred.

## WAS HE A DISCIPLINARIAN?

SO much has been said by writers, including the present one, with reference to Lincoln's tender-heartedness and clemency, his disposition to spare lives instead of sacrificing them, his frequent prevention of the execution of army offenders duly convicted and sentenced, that there is danger, I believe, of over-emphasizing this side of his character. There is a distinct obverse to the shield. According to the view of the highest purpose of army regulations, he was a strict disciplinarian. He had sentiment abundant, but was no sentimentalist. Whatever those of the rigid military school thought at the time, he never allowed his heart to run away with his head. He was always practical, and had good reasons for the general plan he followed of moderation and clemency toward army offenders. He considered first of all that ours was a democratic, chiefly a volunteer, army. Moreover, of 3,700,000 mustered in 1,500,000 were under eighteen years of age. He knew the spirit of such an army was far different

from that of a conscripted army of Europe. He felt that the moral effect of an execution of one of their number for any offense less than that of murder, was contrary to the inbred sense of justice in the breast of every common soldier. He believed that nearly every member of a firing squad experienced within him a feeling of rebellion, of shame and humiliation for the part assigned to him, that he would carry with him through the remainder of his life an unhappy and regretful memory.

There is no doubt that Lincoln thought of all these things, for he knew intimately the thought of common men.

He considered deliberately, that with rare exceptions the military execution of young soldiers was really harmful to army morale. Estimating the common soldier, he simply put himself in his place; and he cared more for the common soldier than he did for the rules of tradition. Lincoln adopted the theory that every life in the army was, or might be made, valuable; every enlisted man owed service which he could not render by being shot; that killing him was really but a quick, almost cowardly, way of disposing of his case, and escaping responsibility for him. Being dead, the man or the boy could never serve anybody again, his family, the community or the state.



Being kept alive, he could be made to serve in one place or another, and always with a chance of reformation in his character.

Therefore, in nearly every case of commutation of the death sentence, it was made conditional. The sentence was not abrogated; only suspended, indefinitely. It was held by the president himself directly over the head of the culprit. The man might not have heard of Damocles, but he knew the feeling of an over-hanging sword.

"Until further orders," read the commutation. This meant, "Your life is in my hands, or those of the officer I may designate to keep watch upon you."

Oftentimes Mr. Lincoln requested, "Forward the records in this case." A study of these would decide him often as to the discipline that should be exercised—but discipline there was in every case; firm and relentless. The man might be replaced in the ranks of his regiment, where in all conscience his lot would not be easy, with the eye of everyone upon him. If the records did not justify this confidence on the part of the President, the man's sentence was often commuted to hard labor in a military prison or elsewhere under guard, for the remaining period of enlistment or "during the war."

Here is a dispatch so unusual yet characteristic

of the president's inflexible policy of real discipline, that I wish to quote it in closing:

Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C., Dec. 29, 1864.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL BUTLER:

There is a man in Company I, Eleventh Connecticut Vols. at Chapin's Farm, Va., under assumed name of William Stanley, but whose real name is Frank R. Judd, who is under arrest and probably about to be tried for desertion. He is the son of our present minister to Prussia, who is a close personal friend of Senator Trumbull and myself. We are not willing for the boy to be shot, but we think it is as well that his trial go regularly on, suspending execution until further orders from me, and reporting to me.

A. LINCOLN.

Young Judd was to be subject to the same trial and discipline as others, with the same kind of sentence hanging over his head.

"Tempering justice with mercy" is the saying oft quoted. Lincoln had a way now and then of reversing time-old maxims. For example, "Right makes might" was the closing note of his Cooper Institute speech. He tempered mercy with justice.

## ADVENTURE AND ESCAPE—1828

**I**N studying Lincoln's later achievements it is worth while to look back occasionally to the experience of his early years. We discover there the roots of character, the man in the making.

"An' where be ye from?" (so the old story went), hailed to a flatboat from the shore.

"In-ge-anny."

"What part?"

"Posey county."

"An' what be ye loaded with?"

"Fruit an' timber."

"What kind o' fruit?"

"Punkins."

"What kind o' timber?"

"Hoop-poles!"

In the "Autobiography" June, 1860, written as the base for a campaign "Life," speaking of himself in third person as Abraham, he relates briefly and simply some narrow escapes.

"In his tenth year, he was kicked by a horse and apparently killed for a time"—(This occurred

many miles from home at a mill that ground by horsepower, where he had taken a grist of corn on horseback.) It was the same year in which his mother died, probably soon after, when new corn was ripe.

Again, "When he was 19, still residing in Indiana, he made his first trip on a flatboat to New Orleans. He was a hired hand merely, and he and a son of the owner, without other assistance made the trip." What a venture was this for two young fellows in their 'teens down the Ohio and lower Mississippi! Think of the toil and danger of it, the skill and courage called for in the waters with their varying currents, waves of passing steamboats, and river outlaws. But these were not all. "The nature of the 'cargo-load' as it was called, made it necessary for them to linger and trade along the sugar coast" (the river plantations of Mississippi or Louisiana), "and one night they were attacked by seven negroes with intent to kill and rob them. They were hurt some in the melee, but succeeded in driving the negroes from the boat, and then," he adds facetiously, they "'cut cable,' 'weighed anchor' and left." What sturdy chaps they were! It was "all in the game," and they seem to have treated the matter lightly. But suppose the negroes had succeeded; their parents would never

have learned in all probability what became of them. In that case, or if the horse kick had been fatal, American history would have been different. We may wonder if the "hired hand" spared to emancipate those negroes or their descendants, thirty-five years later, did not think of them while writing his proclamation.

Yes, it was a great adventure for Abraham. There was much of imagination in it. He was playing that they really sailed a ship at sea; set upon by pirates, they "cut cable," "weighed anchor" and escaped.

The trip was all romantic for the backwoods youth; more than a thousand miles along the one great channel of commerce, and to the one great market of the West. The flatboat was a palace floating through a sea of dreams. New scenes appeared with every turn, and not a moment of the day lacked interest.

Worth more than any college year was this brief term upon the Mississippi, where Lincoln went to school in 1828; and Mark Twain some years later.

## PAY HEED TO HIS WORDS

NOT only we of the United States, but those of the world at large, might have prevented infinite loss and sorrow by taking heed to the words of Lincoln. As a hint pertaining to our right relations with other peoples, we may note the following two sentences of a speech delivered previous to his nomination for the presidency. It was intended to apply primarily to home conditions, but the principle enunciated reaches farther.

“We admit that the United States General Government is not charged with the duty of redressing or preventing all the wrongs in the world. But the Government rightfully may, and subject to the constitution ought to, redress all wrongs which are wrongs to the nation itself.”

Do we not see clearly the application of this principle, and the extension of it to the confederated peoples of the earth, who are struggling for righteousness and true democracy? And are we not one of them?

The issues of the European war in which we took part were essentially the same as those of the

Civil War in the United States. We might indeed call it a civil war of the world.

What was the core of the questions involved?

Shall a small party, a condensed unit of strong men, holding the machinery of government in their hands, assume to dominate not only their own nation, but, with and by that nation, other nations, and the world? Was not this a violation of the Constitution of the world, well understood though unwritten in form? What was the real core of the Civil War in this country? An autocratic party in certain states, strong men united by a common interest in human property and all the social relations created thereby, declared that one state should be superior to the Union as a whole and might separate itself at will. They assumed that a number of such seceding states might confederate in splitting the Union and forming a new confederation.

These men, comparatively few, constituted an autocracy, a privileged class, largely hereditary, who dominated everything within their states. They controlled education or largely prevented it, placing the ban on free and true information, as did the German autocracy.

The Constitution of the United States, by which all states were bound, provided for the election of a president and other officers of the General

Government. In accordance with this provision, Mr. Lincoln, by legal and fair election, was made president.

\* There was not the slightest violation of law involved, either by him or his party. The question following was simple. Shall the majority rule in accordance with the law to which all are equally bound? This was the plain proposition in the forefront of Mr. Lincoln's deliverances on his way to Washington.

Those of all parties, in the North, with few exceptions, gave the answer "yes." They knew what the issue was; they had full and free information. The leaders of the South, the autocracy, also knew, and said "no!" The common people of the South had not free information, but misinformation. They did not know they were fighting to perpetuate and extend class government, not only on others, but themselves. A large proportion of the whites were unable to read, being without free schools. If they did read a newspaper they were none the wiser. They made up the mass and bulk of common soldiers, being officered by the governing class. In all these things they were as the common soldiery of Germany.

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\* Alexander H. Stephens told the Convention in Georgia that there existed no legal cause or excuse for secession—yet he bowed to the will of his party and accepted the Vice-Presidency of the Confederacy.



But they were not, like many of the German soldiers, cruel or brutal. They had a very different heredity, and the inborn spirit of true chivalry. They were honest people misguided, as Lincoln knew, and he had for them only thoughts of pity and deeds of kindness.

## CAMPAIGN EXPENSES

TO a political supporter in Illinois, well meaning, no doubt, Lincoln wrote in March, 1860, three months previous to his nomination: "Thanking you very sincerely for your kind purposes toward me, I am compelled to say the money part of the arrangement you propose is, with me, an impossibility. I could not raise ten thousand dollars if it would save me from the fate of John Brown. Nor have my friends, as far as I know, yet reached the point of staking any money on my chances of success."

To another friend he had written the day before: "Allow me to say that I cannot enter the ring on the money basis—first, because in the main it is wrong; and secondly, I have not and cannot get the money. I say in the main, the use of money is wrong, but for certain objects in a political contest the use of some is both right and indispensable. With me, as with yourself, the long struggle has been one of great pecuniary loss. I now distinctly say this, that if you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago, I will furnish you one hundred dollars to bear the expenses of the trip." He believed,

evidently, that his friend was even worse off than himself.

Looking back now it is easy to believe that in 1858 "money influence" in Illinois may have been strong enough, directly and indirectly, to defeat Lincoln and elect Douglas. On the part of Lincoln and his party the battle was fought entirely upon the one moral issue:—opposition to the extension of slavery and the creation of any more slave states.

On the other hand, many business interests angrily demanded that "all this agitation be stopped," because it created financial disturbance, especially in our relations with the South.

Corporate influence was secretly, if not openly, arrayed on the side of slavery or compromise.

George B. McClellan, the young and self-important vice-president of the Illinois Central Railroad, placed his private car at the disposal of Senator Douglas for weeks at a time. With bands playing, banners flying, rooters rooting, it traversed the whole state, sometimes sweeping by a "local" or a "freight" on a siding where Lincoln sat in the caboose with a few friends, waiting for a clear track.

Once he remarked, with a smile, "I guess they don't detect any odor of royalty in our outfit."

How easy it is now to see that the plain and un-

pretending man in the railway “caboose” was the one really great: that the men who swept past him were but preparing the way for their own failure ultimately. Money and power and show and ostentation were all against Lincoln at the time; God and Truth were with him.

## A "SIX BIT" CAMPAIGN

When Lincoln was a candidate for Congress in 1846 his friends subscribed \$200.00 for his campaign expenses. When the conflict was over he gave back to the treasurer \$199.25, with the statement that his expense had been but 75 cents for the entire canvass. Wherever he went he said he found friends who cared for him and his horse without charge, and he wished the money returned to the owners. He had spent three quarters of a dollar only; that for a few gallons of cider to treat a lot of hands in harvest.















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